

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1048

As Reported by House Committee On:
Higher Education

Title: An act relating to higher education governance.

Brief Description: Regarding higher education governance.

Sponsors: Representatives Seaquist and Haler.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Higher Education: 1/23/13, 2/13/13 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Eliminates the Joint Higher Education Committee.
- Makes technical corrections.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 18 members: Representatives Seaquist, Chair; Pollet, Vice Chair; Haler, Ranking Minority Member; Zeiger, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Fagan, Hansen, Hargrove, Johnson, Magendanz, Pedersen, Reykdal, Riccelli, Sawyer, Scott, Sells, Smith, Tarleton and Wylie.

Staff: Madeleine Thompson (786-7304).

Background:

Changes to Higher Education Governance.

Legislation enacted in 2012 made changes to higher education governance in Washington. The Higher Education Coordinating Board (Board) was eliminated, and many of the Board's functions were eliminated. The Washington Student Achievement Council (Council) was created as a state agency in 2012 legislation. The Council was charged to assume some of the remaining functions of the Board and to propose higher education goals and a strategic

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action plan. The Executive Director of the Council is appointed by the Governor who chooses from a list of names provided by the Council.

The Council comprises nine voting members as follows:

- five citizen members appointed by the Governor with the consent of the Senate, one of which must be a student. Citizen members must represent the diversity of the state and state's geography. Four citizen members serve four-year terms and the student serves a one-year term;
- a representative of the public baccalaureate institutions, selected by the presidents of public baccalaureate institutions;
- a representative of the community and technical college system, selected by the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC);
- a representative of the K-12 system, selected by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) in consultation with the Department of Early Learning and the State Board of Education (SBE). This member must excuse himself or herself from voting on matters pertaining primarily to institutions of higher education; and
- a representative of an independent, nonprofit higher education institution selected by an association of independent nonprofit baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. This member must excuse him or herself from matters that pertain primarily to public institutions.

The Council is permitted to convene ad hoc advisory committees. Any advisory committees addressing secondary to postsecondary transitions and university and college admissions requirements must include K-12 sector representatives including teachers, school directors, principals, administrators, and others.

Student Achievement Council: Purpose and Duties.

The Council must make recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature to increase educational attainment. The Council must propose goals, recommend resources, monitor progress, propose improvements and innovations in higher education to adapt to evolving needs, and advocate for the higher education system.

The Council is required to link the work of the OSPI, the SBCTC, the SBE, the Professional Educator Standards Board, the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, public baccalaureate institutions, and independent schools and colleges, and take a leading role in higher education research and analysis.

The Council is charged to direct the work of the Office of Student Financial Assistance and administer state and federal financial aid programs. The Council has a variety of other duties including higher education research, student transitions, performance and accountability, and consumer protection.

The Joint Higher Education Committee.

The legislation enacted in 2012 that created the Council, also created the Joint Higher Education Committee (Joint Committee). The Joint Committee comprises eight legislators, four from each chamber.

The purpose of the Joint Committee is to review the work of the Council, and engage the Council and higher education stakeholders to create greater communication, coordination, and alignment between the higher education system and the expectations of the Legislature. The Joint Committee is charged to provide recommendations for higher education policy including proposed legislation to the higher education and fiscal committees of the Legislature.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

The Joint Higher Education Committee is eliminated and references in statute to the committee are removed.

Technical corrections are made to replace references to the Higher Education Coordinating Board with the Council. Some references to the Office of Student Financial Assistance (Office) are replaced with the Council to align with 2012 legislation that charged the Council to direct the work of the Office and administer state and federal financial aid. A technical correction is made to align dates.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The section pertaining to adding members to the Washington Student Achievement Council is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The change in membership would bring a very important voice to the Washington Student Achievement Council (Council), bringing both business and labor to talk about the skills businesses need. The business connection has been lost in many parts of the educational system. Expertise can be added in terms of strategic planning and developing accountability for members to help to facilitate the work of the Council. The connection between employers and the higher education system is a vital one.

(With concerns) For impact and credibility of the Council it is important to retain a citizen majority. If the citizen majority is lost, the public will view the work of the Council as more representative of their perspective as compared to the majority of the Council composed of stakeholder groups. There is tension related to the overall size. The Council is already permitted to form advisory groups.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Cindy Zehnder, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board; and Alex Hur, Northwest Career Colleges Federation.

(With concerns) Chris Thompson, Independent Colleges of Washington.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: Terry Sweeney, Philips Healthcare.